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A Moderate's Proposal

Tim Roberts
Essay
First Place

Many crises exist in the world today. Man faces new and different ones at every turn. Some of them deal with the conflict of man against man. They tend to be intense conflicts, but ones in which the solutions are relatively simple. Man merely stops fighting himself. Other struggles are not so easily ended. These are often the conflicts between man and nature. Because communication is not easily accomplished between man and the other elements of his environment, disputes of the two are difficult to reconcile. Those especially difficult are the conflicts created by moving, functioning beings of nature. Their mobility allows them to cause the maximum amount of turmoil. Even more specifically, smaller beings are most troublesome because their size allows them to be evasive. With all this in mind, it logically follows that there is no crisis so serious, no struggle so tragic, and no conflict so irreconcilable as the plight of the everyday family against the cockroach.

One television commercial bills the roach as "Public Enemy No. 1." Although Capone or Dillinger would more often be referred to by this terminology, cockroaches qualify as well. The mental anxiety and personal strife they have caused over the years certainly surpasses that of any big city gangster.

The seriousness of their assault lies in the things the cockroach targets. The cockroach chooses the home because of its vulnerability. Virtually unprotected against the subtlety of his attack, the roach can do more damage to mankind there than in any other place. It penetrates the house as a commando, slipping through minute cracks in the structure. There it breeds and spreads throughout the home, corrupting everything it touches. The cockroach infests a home, undermining the vital purpose it serves. In this way it damages all facets of American life. Its effects are more widespread than any other tragedy. This is one of the reasons it should be given priority over the other conflicts in society.

The second reason the cockroach should be taken so seriously deals with the specific method it uses in its attack. Once inside the home, the roach cleverly moves to the most important room, the kitchen. Food is perhaps the single most important factor of human life. Since food is kept in the kitchen, it is the place the roach can most readily carry out its assault on American life. By destroying food, the human energy source, the cockroach intends to starve man from existence. This charge alone warrants action, but it also has other adverse effects. In addition to death by starvation, the roach's attack on the food supply causes certain amounts of psychological turmoil.

When a person is hungry, he becomes irritable. When two irritable persons come into contact, they invariably fight. The result is the end of all meaningful relationships: marriage, friendship, and the family unit. Even the most rational of persons

are affected. A caring father will see he has no food for his family and insufficient funds to replace adequately that which was destroyed. He will demand that his employer give him a raise. The employer, angered by his employee's boldness will then fire him. Upon dismissal, this once responsible member of society will become a desperate man. Unemployment and crime will sky-rocket and the domestic security of our nation will be threatened.

When the Kremlin learns of this chaotic situation in the U.S., it will find the time convenient for fulfilling their plans of world conquest. The nuclear war that follows will spell the end of mankind.

When viewed in this way it is easy to see just how serious a situation this is. If mankind hopes to secure a safe future for the youth of America, or even a relatively full life for himself, he must deal with the cockroach in the most severe of manners. When a crisis is deemed a serious enough threat to the American people, only one organization is capable of dealing with it: the United States government.

The first step in solving the problem is to introduce it to Congress. They will immediately form a committee against the cockroach, to consider possibilities of action. The first official act of Congress will be to censure the roach's behavior. This is a diplomatic move, intended to cause shame on the part of the offender, prompting reform. Unfortunately, most insects have been unresponsive to such methods in the past. Further measures will have to be taken.

The next step is military occupation. A soldier in each household should be sufficient to curb the roach's destructive inclinations. Intimidation is the key here. An M-16 in plain view would promote fear in the heart of even the boldest cockroach.

In the case that none of these steps are effective, the government would have no alternative but to implement the most severe form of retaliation. A swift vote of Congress would affect a state of war on the cockroach. This move would surely weed out the "sunshine patriots" from among the ranks of the roach army, and leave only the serious ones to deal with. Even though man cannot underestimate the power of the cockroach, it is safe to suppose that they are no match for the United States military. With a full arsenal of both conventional and nuclear weapons, the war could be over in a matter of weeks.

This workable solution is obviously the answer to the current situation. Americans must be impressed with the urgency of this crisis. The sooner the cockroach is eliminated from society, the better. Once this most ruthless of enemies is out of the way, we can concentrate on less critical matters, such as easing world hunger. □